

VZCZCXRO9567
OO RUEHROV
DE RUEHJM #1380/01 2121513
ZNY SSSSS ZZH
O 301513Z JUL 08
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2319
INFO RUEHKK/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 001380

SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/30/2018

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [IS](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#)

SUBJECT: QALQILIYA SECURITY CHIEFS CLAIM SUCCESSES AGAINST
HAMAS, CRIMINAL GANGS, COMPLAIN PA-IDF COOPERATION HAS
STAGNATED

REF: JERUSALEM 1279

Classified By: Consul General Jake Walles, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Summary. Qalqiliya security chiefs told PolOff July 29 that PA security forces (PASF) completed a campaign against vehicle-theft gangs, Hamas activists and wanted criminals in Area B villages from July 15-21, and plan a smaller campaign in villages SE of Qalqiliya in early August. Qalqiliya's National Security Forces (NSF) commander said past improvements in security coordination with the IDF have stagnated and Israeli incursions and operational restrictions are harming PASF effectiveness and public respect. PASF chiefs asked that roadblocks and limitations on Israeli-Arabs' access to Qalqiliya to be lifted to strengthen the economy and reduce the appeal of extremist groups. End summary.

PA Wraps Up Security Campaign,
Plans Follow-on Effort Soon

¶2. (C) At a July 29 meeting in Qalqiliya, Governorate NSF commander BG Faysal Ghazi Salah al-Bishtawi, police chief Maj. Umar al-Bzur and deputy Preventive Security (PSO) director Husam Nazzal told PolOff that PASF arrested 20 wanted criminals, impounded 216 stolen/unregistered vehicles (about half of these were flattened/dismantled) and detained 30 suspected Hamas activists for questioning in an NSF-led joint security campaign in Qalqiliya and 23 Area B villages from July 15-21. BG al-Bishtawi said the campaign focused on restoring PA authority to the 13 villages NE of Qalqiliya and Habla (connected to Qalqiliya by a tunnel), and overcoming initial Hamas and Hizb al-Tahrir efforts to block PA patrols. Al-Bishtawi said PASF plan a smaller campaign in villages SE of Qalqiliya (Kfur Thalith, Saniriya) in early August.

PASF: IDF Cooperation Has Stagnated
After Period of Limited Progress

¶3. (C) BG al-Bishtawi said the IDF has reversed past improvements in security coordination, and has been making uncoordinated incursions into Qalqiliya more frequently compared with the first six months of 2008. He said the NSF has many complaints, including inability to bring in new equipment and make adjustments to Area A checkpoints without prior IDF clearance, but none of these undermine the NSF's morale and public respect like IDF incursions into the city. He commented that the new IDF Brigade Commander in the area, Col. Eran Nif, is less interested in improving coordination than his predecessor, with whom al-Bishtawi said the NSF cooperated to stop stoning of Israeli cars. He added that improvements in IDF-PASF security relations allowed pre-cleared operations in Area B villages starting in early 2008, but this positive trend has now stagnated, and he does

not sense that his IDF counterparts will respond positively to PA requests for more operational freedom.

PSO: We Confiscated Militants' Explosives;
We're Monitoring 5 al-Aqsa Fugitives

14. (S) PSO Deputy Nazzal said the PA confiscated rifles and explosives material from Hamas- and PIJ-linked militants in the recent campaign, but Qalqiliya does not have large terrorist cells or militants with heavy weapons. He said Hamas' support stems from Qalqiliya's envelopment by the separation barrier and checkpoints, and interviews of militant detainees demonstrate their principal motivations are economic misery and humiliation by the IDF, not religion. BG al-Bishtawi added that eliminating "redundant" checkpoints around Qalqiliya and permitting Israeli-Arabs to enter in greater numbers with their vehicles will greatly improve the city's economic prospects.

15. (S) Nazzal said the PSO monitors five al-Aqsa fugitives in Qalqiliya (three others were previously granted amnesty) and said the program is a qualified success. He said expanding the program to include more al-Aqsa militants and PIJ/Hamas activists would provide a strong incentive for gunmen to disarm.

Police: Crime Down, But Unable to
Transfer Suspects for Trial

JERUSALEM 00001380 002 OF 002

16. (C) Police chief al-Bzur told PolOff that coordination with the NSF and PSO is excellent, as is cooperation with police chiefs in nearby Salfit and Tulkarm. He said the recent law-and-order drive has significantly reduced crime and ended the status of some villages as infamous havens for fugitives from the law. However, he said requests to the IDF to allow the PASF to move criminal suspects between cities normally go unanswered or are rejected. He said Qalqiliya has a small criminal court set up to resolve minor offenses, and the police lock-up can hold a maximum of 25-30 suspects for short periods. He added that improvements in IDF clearance for moving suspects is a top police priority.
WALLES